Strategic Plan for the Upland Game Bird Enhancement Program
Draft Outline (and/or Council Agenda)
Vers. 1.0

1) **Background**
   a) Legislative History *(presented)*
   b) Administration and Funding *(presented)*
   c) Summary of Accomplishments by Region and Type
   d) Performance Audit and HB499 *(presented)*
   e) Purpose and Scope of this Plan *(presented)*
   f) Operations and Policy Manual
2) **Overview – purpose of this section includes the current** setting – biology/distribution, program status, issues, needs, and general opportunities/limitations regarding the following:
   a) Upland Game Bird Species *(partially presented)*
      i) Pheasant
      ii) Gray Partridge
      iii) Chukar Partridge
      iv) Wild Turkey
      v) Sharp-tailed grouse
      vi) Sage-grouse
      vii) Ruffed Grouse
      viii) Blue Grouse
      ix) Spruce Grouse
   b) Program Agreements *(partially presented)*
      i) Habitat Enhancement Agreements (Project types, purpose, longevity)
      ii) Habitat Conservation Agreements (Leases and Conservation Easements)
      iii) Farming and Community Agreements (PF, Sheridan County)
      iv) Upland Game Bird Release Agreements
   c) Hunting Access and Landownership
      i) Private lands
      ii) Private lands in Access Programs
      iii) Accessible Public Lands
   d) Integration with other State and Federal Programs
3) **Goal and Philosophical Approach of the Upland Game Bird Enhancement Program**
   (Overarching goal. Prominent principles and values that serve to define the Program?)
4) **Effective Project Development and Implementation**
   a) Habitat Projects (Definitions--*Project, Project Area, Area open to Hunting, Hunter-day, Reasonable Public Hunting)*
      i) How do habitat projects fulfill Program goals?
      ii) Habitat Systems and Scale *(What is an appropriate scale for evaluating a prospective project? Does this vary by project type? Should habitat components beyond the Project Area be used to evaluate a prospective project? Should the program require specific minimum ratios of habitat components? Should these minimum habitat components be stipulated over the contract period, even if they are not directly part of the project--e.g. nesting cover adjacent to a shelterbelt project.)*
      iii) Private Lands
         (1) Cost Share and Incentives *(What are reasonable types and amounts of cost share? What would incentives comprise? How and when would incentives be used?)*

            (2) Contract Length, Renewal, and Recording *(What are effective agreement lengths, by project type? What considerations and approach should be used for renewing contracts? What types of contracts should be recorded with the property title?)*

            (3) Access components

                (a) Minimum Standards *(Establish standard or minimum hunter-days based on project type? Cost? Location?)*

                (b) Ties to Project, Project Area *(What area should be stipulated as open to hunting?)*

        iv) Public Lands

            (1) Cost Share and Contributions *(What would be required for project cost share on public lands?)*

            (2) Project Agreements for Public Lands *(What purpose do these agreements need to serve? What should be their longevity? Who should be required to sign these agreements? Should the department be pursuing umbrella agreements with land management agencies? Purpose?)*

        v) Partitioning Funding *(What is the appropriate portion of UGBEP funds to be dedicated to habitat?)*

    b) Upland Game Bird Release and Supplemental Pheasant Feeding Projects

        i) Release Projects

            (1) How do release projects fulfill Program goals?

            (2) Habitat Systems and Scale *(What analysis of habitat is necessary for developing a release agreement? What habitat components are needed for Area Open to Hunting? Should a prioritization scheme be developed to assure releases take place in the highest priority areas when interest exceeds funding? If so, what priority criteria should be used?)*

            (3) Upland Game Bird Release Timing and Age *(What should be the seasonal timeframe for releasing? Age of released pheasants?)*

        ii) Feeding Projects

            (1) How do feeding projects fulfill Program goals?

            (2) Habitat Systems and Scale *(Consider current weather criteria for feeding pheasants. Are there changes that would make this more effective?)*

        iii) Partitioning Funding *(What is the appropriate portion of UGBEP funds to be dedicated to pheasant release/feeding?)*

    c) Administration

        i)   How does Program administration fulfill Program goals?

        ii)   Partitioning Funding *(What is the appropriate portion of UGBEP funds to be dedicated to Administration?)*

    d) Contract Violations and Penalties *(Are current measures sufficient? Violations of contract terms, land sales/transfers, other scenarios to consider?)*

    e) Council Recommendations

    f) Strategic Objectives with Performance Measures

5) **Program Priorities and Strategic Implementation**

    a) Region

        i) Region 1

            (1) Focus areas, biological, economic and recreational opportunities/limitations, resource needs, other issues

        ii) Region 2

          (1) Focus areas, biological, economic and recreational opportunities/limitations, resource needs, other issues

    iii) Region 3

          (1) Focus areas, biological, economic and recreational opportunities/limitations, resource needs, other issues

    iv) Region 4

          (1) Focus areas, biological, economic and recreational opportunities/limitations, resource needs, other issues

    v) Region 5

          (1) Focus areas, biological, economic and recreational opportunities/limitations, resource needs, other issues

    vi) Region 6

          (1) Focus areas, biological, economic and recreational opportunities/limitations, resource needs, other issues

    vii) Region 7

          (1) Focus areas, biological, economic and recreational opportunities/limitations, resource needs, other issues

  b) Statewide Summary of Priorities

  c) *Council Recommendations*

6) *Strategic Objectives with Performance Measures*

7) **Program Accessibility and Strategic Implementation**

  a) Overview

  b) Hunters

    i) Publicizing Program *(What are effective means for assuring program support from hunters?)*

    ii) Access guide, Project Signs *(How can we effectively connect hunters to projects?)*

  c) Landowners

    i) Marketing and Outreach *(Recommendations for more effectively engaging landowners, expanding participation?)*

  d) Organizations

    i) Marketing and Outreach *(Recommendations for more effectively engaging organizations, expanding participation?)*

    ii) Agreements and Reimbursement *(Consider current MOU formats. Consider current reimbursement rules for organizations. Need to clarify who should be signatory to project agreements that occur on private and public lands—who should be responsible for what contract components?)*

  e) Communities

    i) Community Agreements *(What unique roles do these serve? How can the program be more effective in engaging communities?)*

  f) *Council Recommendations*

  g) *Strategic Objectives with Performance Measures*

8) **Integration with other State and Federal Programs**

  a) Overview

  b) Hunting Access Enhancement Program *(In addition to establishing UGBEP on Block Management Areas, are there unique ways that the two programs might integrate?*

  c) Habitat Montana *(Cost share on conservation easements? Developing Program projects on CE lands?)*

    d) Farm Bill *(incl. role Farm Bill plays on UGB landscapes. Opportunities for effectively integrating funding? Working arrangements between agencies?)*

    e) *Council Recommendations*

    f) *Strategic Objectives with Performance Measures*

9) **Program Evaluation**

    a) Monitoring Contract Compliance and Project Effectiveness *(How often should projects be checked for compliance? Habitat effectiveness? Hunter utilization? What measures need to be taken to fulfill these obligations?)*

    b) Evaluating Hunter Satisfaction *(Recommendations as to needs?)*

    c) Evaluating Landowner Satisfaction *(Recommendations as to needs?)*

    d) Progress Reporting *(HB499 requires annual reporting to Council. Statute requires reporting status and progress to Legislature. Other outlets for reporting accomplishments and progress?)*

    e) *Council Recommendations*

    f) *Strategic Objectives with Performance Measures*

10) **Summary of Objectives and Performance Measures**

11) **Summary of Recommended Rule Changes**